



Representative Earl Blumenauer

The Community Character Act

H.R. 1433

The Community Character Act will provide \$50 million to assist states, tribal governments, and native Hawaiian organizations in updating their planning enabling statutes and in conducting comprehensive land use planning.

WHY IS H.R. 1433 NEEDED?

The American Planning Association has found that the planning laws of approximately half the states are based on or influenced by outdated acts drafted in the 1920s. Inadequate and outdated state planning models have contributed to increased public and private costs for infrastructure development, inefficient and lost economic opportunities, and environmental degradation. A few examples:

- According to FEMA, flooding cost an average of \$4.3 billion each year from 1988 to 1997. FEMA believes a principle cause is poor planning and unwise development.
- Gridlock at O'Hare Airport threatens to cost the Chicago area up to \$10 billion a year in lost activity ranging from business meetings to corporate investment.
- The South Coast Air Quality Management District, which has the strictest air-pollution regulations in the country, estimates that air pollution in the four-county Los Angeles area costs \$7.4 billion per year.

WHAT WILL H.R. 1433 DO?

Specifically, states, tribal governments, and native Hawaiian organizations would be eligible for grants of up to \$1,000,000 each upon application approval by the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Applicants that receive grants would be required to provide 10 percent in matching funds. Funds may be used to obtain technical assistance in drafting land use planning legislation; carrying out research and development for planning programs; conducting workshops, educating and consulting for local officials and policymakers; and involving citizens in the planning process. **The bill does not mandate that states update their existing laws but rather seeks to support that process once it is underway.** The bill provides funding to help support what are ultimately local decisions.

WHY UPDATE STATUTES AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING?

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▪ Coordinate Infrastructure Development | ▪ Advance Social Equity |
| ▪ Conserve Historic and Scenic Resources | ▪ Enhance Community Character |
| ▪ Promote Economic Development | ▪ Sustainably Manage Natural Resources |
| ▪ Provide Range of Housing Options | ▪ Support Smart Growth Principles |

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 1433:

H.R. 1433 currently has received bi-partisan cosponsorship from 59 representatives in the House. The bill has also received endorsements from national organizations such as the American Planning Association, National Association of Realtors, Smart Growth America, and American Society of Landscape Architects.

For more information, contact James Koski in Congressman Blumenauer's Washington, D.C. office at (202) 225-4811, or Julia Pomeroy in the Portland District office at (503) 231-2300, or check out our website at <http://www.house.gov/blumenauer>

**Background
Information**